

BEDFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT



Emergency Preparedness Guidelines



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Emergency Preparedness Guidelines

Opening Remarks

The law enforcement profession has been challenged over the years responding to natural disasters, general calls for service, and major incidents requiring quick response to assure the delivery of services goes uninterrupted. One key element in bringing these and other crisis under control is being prepared before they occur.

Although Y2K did not cause any major problems, it did give us incentive to prepare for the unknown. With the recent attacks on America (9/11) the level of security throughout the nation has increased in appropriate areas sensitive to National Security.

Although we have not had direct threats at the local level, we feel it is imperative to establish basic local guidelines to assist our residents in the event of a national, state, or local emergency. Preparedness guidelines are exactly what they state, GUIDELINES that may or may not be followed by individuals throughout the community. Our intentions are not to scare or bring additional anguish to residents who already have heightened fears but rather to offer common sense approaches on how to prepare before an emergency occurs.

The Bedford Police Department has utilized information from the American Red Cross – Homeland Security Advisory System to help establish these guidelines. Additional information can be obtained from their official website at <http://www.redcross.org>.

As stated in our Police Department Mission Statement, we the members of the Bedford Police Department are committed to improving the quality of life through a partnership that promotes safe, secure neighborhoods.

A cooperative partnership is needed between the police, city employees, the public, local business owners, city officials, utility companies,

schools and churches in an effort to diminish the impact of an emergency situation and restore order to the community.

The supervisory staff of the Police Department has been trained to handle emergency situations as they arise. We are confident we can provide the necessary services to all the residents and business owners in the event of a local emergency. Additional resources would be summoned in the event of a larger more catastrophic occurrence. The City of Bedford is committed to providing all the residents professional quality services in times of crisis and as a normal course of business.

What You Can Do to Prepare Your Family – Four Steps To Safety

1. Create a Disaster Plan.

- Meet with your family and discuss why you need to prepare for disaster. Explain the dangers of fire, severe weather, and earthquakes.
- Discuss the types of disasters that are most likely to happen. Explain what to do in each case.
- Pick two places to meet:
 1. Outside your home in case of fire
 2. Outside your neighborhood in case you can't return home. Make sure everyone has the address and phone number of the location.
- Ask an out-of-state friend to be your "family contact". After a disaster, it is often easier to call long distance. Everyone should know what the contact number(s) are.
- Discuss what to do in an evacuation. Plan how to take care of your pets.

2. Complete This Checklist

- Post emergency telephone numbers by phones (fire, police, ambulance, etc.)
- Teach children how and why to call 9-1-1 or your local Emergency Medical Service for emergency help.
- Show each family member how and when to turn off the utilities (water, gas, electricity) at the main switches.
- Check to see if you have adequate insurance coverage.
- Get training from the Fire Department for each family member on how to use the fire extinguisher (ABC Type), and show them where it is kept.

- Install smoke detectors on each level of your home, especially near bedrooms.
- Conduct a home hazard hunt.
- Stock emergency supplies and assemble a **Disaster Supply Kit**.
- Take a Red Cross first aid and CPR class.
- Determine the best escape routes from your home. Find two ways from each room.
- Find the safe places in your home for each type of disaster.

3. Find Out What Could Happen In Your Area

- Contact your local Red Cross chapter or emergency management office before a disaster occurs – be prepared to take notes.
- Ask what types of disasters are most likely to occur in your part of the country. Ask for information on how to prepare for each type of disaster spoken about.
- Learn about your communities warning system (if they have one), what they sound like and what you should do if they go off.
- Ask about animal care, most shelters will not allow animals inside due to health regulations.
- Look into how you can assist the elderly living near by.
- Look into disaster plans at your workplace, your children's school or day care center and other places your family spends time.

4. Practice and Maintain Your Plan

- Quiz your kids every six months or so.
- Conduct fire and emergency evacuation drills.
- Replace stored water and food every six months.
- Test your smoke detectors and replace the batteries at least once a year.

Additional Suggestions For Families

1. Neighbors Helping Neighbors

- Working with neighbors can save lives and property. Meet with you neighbors to plan how the neighborhood could work together after a disaster until help arrives. If you are a member of a neighborhood organization, such as a home owners association or crime watch group, introduce disaster preparedness as a new activity. Know your neighbors special skills (e.g., medical, dental, technical) and consider how you could help neighbors who have

special needs such as the disabled or elderly. Make plans for child care in case parents can't get home.

2. If Disaster Strikes

- Remain calm and patient, put your plan into action.
- Give first aid to those in need
- Listen to your battery-powered radio for news and instructions.
- Check for damage in and to your home. Use flashlights, do not light matches or turn on electrical switches if you suspect damage.
- Sniff for gas leaks, starting at the water heater. If you smell gas or suspect a leak, turn off the main gas valve and get everyone outside quickly.
- Shut off any other utilities that were damaged.
- Clean up spilled medicines, chemical products, cleaners, gasoline or other flammable products.
- Confine or secure your pets.
- Call your family contact – do not continue to use your phone unless it is a life threatening situation (Others will be trying to reach their contacts also).
- Check on your neighbors, especially the elderly and disabled.
- Make sure you have an adequate water supply in case service is cut off.
- Stay away from downed power lines.

3. Disaster Supplies Kit

- There are six basics you should stock for your home: 1)water, 2)food, 3)first aid supplies, 4)clothing and bedding, 5)tools and emergency supplies, and 6)special items. Keep the items you would most likely need during an evacuation in an easy to carry container.

(For a complete and detailed list of the Disaster Supplies Kit go to <http://www.redcross.org/services/disaster/beprepared/supplies.html>

4. Follow The Homeland Security Advisory System Recommendations.

In the event of a terrorist attack or other National Emergency, the Office of Homeland Security has developed a Risk of Attack Color Coded Alert System. The colors associated with a given threat level have recommendations associated with that color. There are five threat level colors indicating which state of heightened alert the country is currently adhering to. They are as follows:

Severe (RED ALERT)

High (ORANGE)

Elevated (YELLOW)

Guarded (BLUE ALERT)

Low (GREEN ALERT)

Additional information on this alert system and the recommendations associated with each level can be found at the Homeland Security home page at www.homelandsecurity.com or at the Red Cross home page at www.RedCross.com.

We hope the information listed in this brief report is helpful to all the residents of the City of Bedford and we can be reached at our community homepage at www.bedfordoh.gov/.